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ABSTRACT

This booklet, a discovery/work text, asks learners to take a careful look at the ways they participate in communication situations, at the form their participation in communication takes, and at the personal and societal consequences of communication. Laboratory activities focus on techniques of communication and on strategies for dealing with communication situations. Exercises and commentary are specifically addressed to the following questions concerning communication in social groups: What are some of the characteristics of communication in groups? How do groups use symbols in communication? How can communication be a tool for control? Why do we call communication a process? How does culture influence human communication? (KS)

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Freedom to be . . . in communication

Part 3 Communication in social groups

by SHARON MURPHY
Milwaukee, Wis.

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CS 203 523

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FREEDOM TO BE . . . IN COMMUNICATION

by Sharon Murphy

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A major aim of *Freedom to Be* is to take a communication approach to helping learners define their own self-understanding in the context of human communication. A second major aim, a corollary of the first, is to develop heurism or a problem-solving, alternative-finding attitude toward human communication behavior. A third, related aim is to promote habits of predicting consequences of communication behavior, of using the predictions to influence consequences, and of dealing with these consequences and predictions.

This booklet series, a discovery-work-text, asks learners to take a careful look at how they participate in day-to-day communication situations; at what form their participation-in-communication takes; and at the personal and societal consequences of this participation-in-communication. Lab activities focus on techniques of communication (language, customs, media usage) and on strategies for dealing with communication situations. 'Strategies' here include methods of evaluating and naming situations as well as skills employed in communicationally dealing with situations. Basic to the booklets is the naming and working through communication situations drawn as closely as possible from everyday life experiences of young people.

Strategies used in the booklets exemplify approaches to learning and communication taken by scholars cited throughout this manual. Excerpts from works of some of the more significant of these scholars appear in the collection of readings at the back of the manual. As mentioned earlier, the book is heuristically based and is intended to provoke application of self-discovery tendencies in dealing with study of human communication as well as other studies. To the extent that this application takes place, there will be many discovery programs, each modified by the individual teacher's insights, special needs, and peculiar relationship with a group of learners.

Several exercises recur at various stages in the booklets with variations applied each time. This strategy can demonstrate to learners how a single activity or experience can teach several things, can help in exploring several concepts. It can thus help counteract the tendency to lock in on an exercise which one has experienced or used to study a given concept and to see no further implications for insight or development of that exercise. Learners all too frequently suggest by their attitude toward content that 'We already thought about that. There's nothing more to learn.' Throughout *Freedom to Be*, students are asked to re-consider, to re-define. They are confronted with the transactional nature of human communication, in which persons change, and are changed by, what they take into account, and how, and to what purpose.

HOW THESE BOOKLETS WORK

Specifically, program strategies can be grouped as follows:

Probe focuses the learning in each unit. It is a question designed not so much to be specifically answerable as to provoke thought, experimentation and discussion leading to Discover, the content center of each unit.

Discover is the on-going story line or narrative connecting each chapter, synthesizing much of what major communication scholars have discovered and written. It also sums up the learning experiences and major insights in each unit. For this reason, it appears very near the end of each unit, forming the framework of the book and crystallizing insights learners gain in the exercises and activities.

Experience offers anecdotes, poetry, visuals and assorted elements of everyday life and experiences which provide context and significance for each unit. Items in Experience are readily supplemented by clippings from local and campus media, current television or motion picture features, controversies and other problem situations in school and community. Experience can be added to as the unit goes on and students find pertinent items.

Lab involves students in structured experiments and experiences in which they confront or get into situations and try to find out what happens communicationally between and within and among people, and why it happens, and what it feels like, and how snags occur or might be avoided.

Inquire offers a series of questions about communication, some growing out of Lab exercises, some related to elements in Experience,

and all leading to the insights summarized in Discover.

Interface brings learners' everyday experiences into focus in the classroom. It asks learners to think of communication situations at home, school, work, recreation. And it asks them to evaluate their own individual responses to such communication situations. Frequently in Interface, sometime in other strategy elements in the book, learners have the options of sharing their insights or simply reflecting privately (perhaps through the Journal). Interface provides a context for exploring values, feelings, and experiences, as these relate to learners' communication skills. In keeping with the notion of ***Freedom to be . . . in Communication***, it lets learners reflect on why they do and feel and react as they do and pursue this reflection seriously, legitimately, without needing to apologize or explain why.

Simulation, appearing occasionally, offers a situation in which learners get involved in an event, assuming particular roles, making decisions and taking definite action. Simulation has the appearance of a game and provides opportunities for trying out alternatives and exploring fresh possibilities. It allows participants to deal with consequences of decisions they make and actions they take.

Investigate suggests areas of further study and investigation, growing out of insights gained in the individual unit. It poses specific tasks for researching communication questions within the range of student interest as well as need. Most Investigate tasks are described in such a way that they take very little modification to make them pertinent to changing communication atomosphere in individual learner groups, schools and communities.

Journal is each learner's personal summary of the unit's situations and exercises. A personal summary becomes thus the learner's synthesis of and recations about what he has learned and how, in the context of the unit's observations, discussions and activities. As a running commentary it might well provide a valuable supplement to the narrative offered in Discover. It might also be the most important aspect of the whole book.

At times, the sequencing of these strategies will differ, owing to the nature of the particular communicational aspect under consideration. The apparent irregularity is designed to keep an in-process flow and flavor to the entire booklet and to prevent a static or monotonous rhythm. Ideally, each exercise and discussion will build on preceding experiences and in some fashion set the stage for succeeding activities. At any point, learner groups might set the stage for succeeding activities. At any point, learner groups might pause, adapt or enlarge upon materials, and evaluate cumulative insights. Throughout this Teachers Manual, suggestions are made for the extended study of communication questions. Such extended study may prove necessary or useful for one group in one local at one particular crisis point, while another group somewhere else may need to more fully explore other aspects, in response to particular communication atmospheres.

Most importantly, the booklet aims at making study of communication a relational, on-going experience for students and teachers. It is designed with learners in mind–and attempts to put away as much as is possible the student-teacher dichotomy which far too many texts promote, strengthen, or at least allow.

TO THE STUDENT

Introduction to *Freedom to be . . . in Communication*

We frequently hear such phrases as 'What we have here is a failure to communicate' (from the movie *Cool Hand Luke*), or 'What we need in this school is better communication between students and faculty,' or 'We have a real communication breakdown in this family.'

What is usually meant in such instances is that, somehow, responses to communication activities are not what were anticipated. Somewhere, somehow, the images and experiences in one person's head are distorted by the person or persons with which communication was intended. So a vital life process is temporarily awry. People don't have it together in situations where they need one another. But what is this communication process upon which so many ventures depend? Communication! And we all know what communication is. Or do we?

These booklets explore human communication and ways people participate in communication. It examines a process that has consequences for every living individual as well as for the life and quality of society. *Freedom to be . . . in Communication* is a communication way of helping you to understand yourself and others. It works with problems in human behavior and attitudes. It tries to give you experience in predicting consequences of human behavior, in using the predictions to influence communication outcomes, and in dealing with these consequences and predictions.

EXPERIENCE

PROBE

What are some characteristics of communication in groups?

'Society not only continues to exist **by** transmission, **by** communication, but it may fairly be said to exist **in** transmission, **in** communication. There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community, and communication.' —John Dewey, **Democracy and Education**, p. 4.

LAB

Consensus - Part One

Listed below are 13 items about schools and education. Read them carefully and rank them in the order of their importance. Do this ranking independently.

___ Schools should teach people the skills they need to make a living.

___ Schools should give people a chance to think in an atomosphere of stimulation and freedom.

___ Schools should teach people their obligations to their fellow human beings.

___ Schools should insist on discipline and hard work since nobody can succeed without these good habits.

___ Schools should free up people to try out new ideas, even if in their experimenting people make mistakes and have to take the consequences.

___ Schools should offer an environment in which people can be in communication with people of many different life styles and ways of thinking.

___ Schools should change with the times.

___ Schools should use the natural environment as subject matter for study.

___ Schools should encourage patriotism and service.

___ Schools should be orderly, attractive, and quiet enough for people to work and study.

___ Schools should offer good salaries so that good teachers can be paid what they deserve.

___ Schools should dismiss teachers who can't relate to students.

___ Schools should give students a genuine voice in decision-making, and let them vote on whether or not particular teacher's contracts should be renewed.

LAB

Consensus - Part Two

Listed below are 13 items about schools and education you ranked on the previous page. In groups of 5 to 8, come to a consensus on the ordering of the items.

Some pointers on coming to a consensus:

Not every person will completely approve of every ranking. The group should try to make each ranking one which all group members can accept at least partially.

Try to avoid arguing, as well as changing your mind just to reach agreement. Be logical, and support only solutions you can at least somewhat agree with.

Avoid majority vote, averaging or trading off; instead, discuss differences.

___ Schools should teach people the skills they need to make a living.

___ Schools should give people a chance to think in an atomosphere of stimulation and freedom.

___ Schools should teach people their obligations to their fellow human beings.

___ Schools should insist on discipline and hard work since nobody can succeed without these good habits.

___ Schools should free up people to try out new ideas, even if in their experimenting people make mistakes and have to take the consequences.

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LAB

Dividing the Loot

Your gang has just completed a daring robbery and you have 10 minutes in which to divide the loot and scatter. There is a superstition among the gang members, and you share it, that if the loot from any operation is divided equally there will be bad luck for all members. Another superstition, based on several experiences within the gang, is that if anyone assumes leadership and makes the final decision on dividing the loot, he has bad luck, often losing his life, within a year.

So the decision must be made by the group. Each of you wants as much as possible, however, because the gang members will have to go into hiding for a long time, and none of you can count on any of the others for help.

INQUIRE

What events in the consensus-making process led to the decision you made about group rankings? How did group members make their ideas and feelings known to one another? What actions by individuals led to consensus in each group?

What communication behaviors did you consciously engage in during the Consensus task? What nonverbal clues did you pick up from group members which influenced you to act in certain ways? How is communication in groups different from one-to-one communication such as you explored earlier? Would you say that group communication is more complicated or less complicated than interpersonal one-to-one communication? Why?

How did behaviors during the Dividing the Loot differ from those exhibited during the Consensus Lab? What were the added or different pressures operating in Dividing the Loot which might have changed the way individuals or groups responded to the task? Can you suggest any generalizations about human communication behavior as a result of comparing these two group activities?

DISCOVER

We find a lot of our communication occurring at a third level, within groups. Group communication involves a more extended degree of participation but often a more restricted form of interpersonal contact.

School classrooms, labor unions, football teams all are groups that function well or poorly depending upon the quality of participation in communication within them, as well as upon participants' hidden agendas or unconscious motives for participation.

The dictionary defines agenda as 'a list or program of things to be done.' When the agenda is hidden, when the individual has motives even he is unaware (or only remotely aware) of, his activity can take strange directions.

If a teacher needs to feel power, that teacher may try to make students submissive, powerless, rather than free as a result of learning. A labor leader who has a grudge or needs financial power may not be genuinely interested in the welfare of union members. A glory-grabbing athlete will probably hamper the team's effort in an attempt to get attention from pro scouts or to chalk up a league record. Each person is responding to a need—often being unaware of the need and the action it impels.

INTERFACE

Have you been in a group communication situation recently in which one group member's hidden agendas interferred with the group's efforts to do something? How did you react?

How, as a student, have you forced hidden agendas upon a teacher?

How do hidden agendas operate in decision-making situations within your family? Are family members likely to be aware of these hidden agendas?

DISCOVER

Hidden agendas arise out of many personal preoccupations and problems. One writer (Phillips) lists four main sources of hidden agendas: physical problems including hunger, pain, uncomfortable position, noise, and others; concern for one's role and standing within a group; personality differences or conflicts within a group; and external loyalties not directly related to the work of the group but strongly influencing the decisions of individuals within the group.

There are several ways people deal with their conscious or unconscious needs in group communication situations. In discussing these needs and dealings one author writes of various versions of what he calls 'the interaction game' and describes them.

The game he calls 'let's cooperate' features players evidently suppressing disagreements in an effort to find agreements. The game 'I want it my way' sees a player demanding that his ideas be accepted regardless of their value or correctness. Sometimes the players can build a set of allies, sometimes not. In 'It can't be done' a player waits until partial agreement on a solution or method and then offers a barrage of reasons why the solution won't work. In 'This is dull, let's talk about something else,' players vie with one another in a 'can you top this' fashion.

INTERFACE

What communication games have you been involved in (however unconsciously) in the past few days? How did you catch yourself in the act?

What communication games did you observe members of the group you studied playing? Did there appear to be one or more group members who were aware of the game playing going on? If so, how did the person react or attempt to deal with the game playing?

The larger the group, the more group members tend to direct their attention in communication toward persons similar to themselves. Why do you think this is the case? What is the motivation, often unconscious, behind this tendency? How strong is this tendency in you?

INVESTIGATE

What kinds of groups are in communication in this school? **Divide** into research tems, with each team choosing one group for a case study. Observe its operations for at least two weeks, keeping a diary with questions such as the following in mind:

What are the forms that communication takes within the group?

How do individuals exhibit membership in the group?

How do group members keep 'outsiders' out? How is 'recruitment' or 'initiation' carried on?

Would you say group members are aware of their 'recruiting' and 'initiating' patterns?

What proportion of the factors you list is verbal and what proportion is nonverbal?

What kinds of hidden agendas do you observe operating within the group?

Meet with members of the group you studied, and discuss with them your case study. How do they regard the accuracy of your observations? What specific differences, if any, do they see between what they think the situation is and what you judged it to be? What recommendations would you make to them as a group about their patterns of communication? Did their awareness of your activities during the case study affect in any way the forms of communication within the group? If so, can you say how?

JOURNAL

PROBE

How do groups use symbols in communication?

LAB

Labels

Below are several labels frequently applied to persons. What are the meanings each label conjures up for you? Indicate these meanings, and try to show where you got them. Compare your meanings with those held by other students.

a real go-getter	intelligent	pusher
dropout	swinger	conservative
good Joe	tough guy	red-neck
super bad	boss	(your list)
radical	good head	

INQUIRE

Could you change the labels, to make each positive where it is negative, or negative where it is positive? For example, 'a real go-getter' can become 'a ruthless achiever,' etc.

LAB

Menus

You are designing the menu for an exclusive restaurant. Your immediate challenge is to assign names to the following dishes, in order to encourage restaurant patrons to try them. What sorts of guidelines will you follow in assigning the names? Before you begin, mark the dishes you absolutely would **not** like to eat.

The dishes: fried peanut butter and banana sandwiches, rattlesnake meat on rye crackers, dandelion green salad, mashed potato sandwich on a sesame bun, sweet potato pie, sweet and sour chicken gizzards, burned bread with gooey cheese inside, fried port brains, burned dead cow, burned dead chicken, dried skinned deer, dead fish fried in lard, moldy cheese, salty brown fish eggs.

LAB

In designing the menu, why did you select the names you did? Did the names you gave the dishes make you any more willing to try the ones you indicated you absolutely would **not** like to eat? How do your names compare with those of others in the group?

Can you pinpoint any reasons why specific dishes do not appeal to you? Can you think of dishes or delicacies eaten in other countries or in other parts of the United States that you would not want to eat? Have you yet tried any of the dishes?

INQUIRE

Descriptions

How would you describe the following things for someone who have never seen, heard of, or in any way experienced them?

1. an electric lamp
2. love
3. a television set
4. an explosion
5. air conditioning
6. competition
7. failure
8. semester exams
9. military draft
10. water
11. football game

Would a dictionary definition be sufficient? Why? Why not? How do you go about formulating the descriptions? How do you have any idea of what these things are yourself?

LAB

Dictionary

Design a dictionary of words you think most need to be redefined for use by you and your friends. How would the definitions you write differ from those which could be written by your parents? Your English teacher? Younger children?

LAB

Characteristics

As you work through the following questionnaire, try to be aware of the sources of your opinions or perceptive patterns. Try to be aware, too, of what the words in each questionnaire itme mean.

I. Match the following traits with their corresponding groups:

Russians	1. hot-tempered
Danes	2. promiscuous
Chinese	3. thieves
American Indians	4. cold-blooded
Jews	5. shrewd
Irish	6. sly
Italians	7. methodical
Negroes	8. musical
Germans	9. bored
Puerto Ricans	10. blood-thirsty
Gypsies	11. reserved
Engish	12. flashy clothes
	13. sleepy

II. Complete the following statements:

1. In my opinion truck drivers are . .
2. Traveling salesmen seem to be . . .
3. Sorority girls usually . . .
4. Politicians are . . .
5. People say that Madison Avenue executives . . .
6. New Yorkers are . . .
7. Models are . . .
8. Homosexuals are . . .
9. In this day and age, parents of large families . . .

INQUIRE

When we look at a person and stereotype that person, we really banish the individual and substitute the mental picture we have in our minds. How much stereotyping appears in your answers to the Characteristics questionnaire? Was this intentional or unintentional? What are some approaches people can take to their internal habits of perception which can avoid the dangers of stereotyping? Are stereotypes ever useful?

How useful are labels such as those found throughout this chapter? How often do you use labels in everyday conversation? What would happen if everyone stopped using all labels? How many labels appear in your designed dictionary?

DISCOVER

The words we use to describe events and people arise, as we've seen, from our experience, from our transactions with things, people and events in our environment. We are influenced by, and we influence, the way other people see and talk about things, people, and events.

Human societies **are** societies because they can use symbols to communicate about ideas, events and needs. A commonly used form of symbols in society is verbal language. Words and the meanings people have for them and have agreed upon for them both simplify and add efficiency to people's participation in communication. Sometimes, however, words cause trouble.

When words are not used in commonly accepted ways, they can interfere with communication. For example, a young man may be accustomed to casual and careless pronounciation of words in everyday use. If he trains for a high executive position he may learn more precise and sophisticated use of language. But if, with this training, he goes back to his neighborhood and tries to use words there the way he uses them at the office, he may be rejected or at least ridiculed. And if he returns to his neighborhood with important information that the neighborhood people need to know, his office language patterns may cause the neighborhood residents to ignore his message, even if it could protect their health or property.

Amid all the transactions a person participates in within groups, there are many different selves he offers and exhibits in response to many different social interactions. And depending upon the action 'self' he is at a given time, he makes use of various symbols and symbolic actions. The verbal symbols (language) one uses depend on the situation, as do the clothes worn, the kinds of meaningful actions performed, and the sorts of responses expected of and given by other people.

INTERFACE

Have you recently observed yourself labelling someone? Have you recently been the victim of someone else's labelling activity? How (would) did you respond to the experience?

Can you describe instances in which words were given meanings and interpretations quite different from those you intended when you used them?

How many differnet 'selves' are you in response to different social interactions?

INVESTIGATE

1. **List** as many examples as you can of labeling.
2. **Discuss** the following quote by Wendell Johnson, as it relates to words and symbols in communication:

   'One may not step into the same river twice, not only because the river flows and changes, but also because the one who steps into it changes too, and is never at any two moments identical.' –**People in Quandries**, p. 23.
3. **List** 13 to 20 words which have different meanings depending upon people and circumstances. **Supply** the various meanings.
4. **Construct** a symbol system (code) which you could use in communicating with classmates and friends.
5. **List** as many positive values or functions of labeling as you can.
6. **Describe** the difficulties you think are caused by labeling habits.
7. **Discuss** the origins and positive influences and functions of dictionaries. **Identity** also their negative functions and influences.
8. **Describe** the different conversation patterns you yourself adopt in response to circumstances in which you find yourself.

JOURNAL

PROBE

How can communication be a tool for control?

EXPERIENCE

Public Speeches

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this country, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage—and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

—John F. Kennedy, Inaugural address (from *The Papers of the Presidents – John F. Kennedy, 1961*, (Washington, 1962, pp. 1-3)

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

—from the Declaration of Independence, preamble

Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nations from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

—Martin Luther King, speech 'I Have a Dream,' delivered in Washington, August 28, 1963.

The best way to attract and hold attention is to create an air of mystery. 'Mix a little mystery with everything,' for mystery 'arouses veneration.' When you explain something, don't be too explicit. Be silent, for 'Cautious silence is the holy of holies of worldly wisdom.' Guesses and doubts about the extent of your talent arouse more veneration than accurate knowledge of them, be they ever so great. Be careful in speaking. Talk as if you were making your will. Do not explain too much, for most 'men do not esteem what they understand (but) venerate what they do not see.' Many men praise without being able to tell why. This is because they venerate the unknown as a mystery, and praise it because they hear it praised.

—quoted from Balthasar Gracian, 16th Century Jesuit, by Hugh Duncan in *Communication and Social Order*, Oxford, p. 218.

EXPERIENCE

One-liners

Whose side are you on, anyway?

You've come a long way, baby!

Nixon's the One!

It's the real thing.

Gentlemen: Start your engines!

And to the republic for which it stands,one nation under God, indivisible . . .

Sieg Heil!

And they lived happily ever after.

INQUIRE

In what ways do the assorted pictorial symbols exercise some sort of control or direction on observers? Is this control a function of the symbol itself, or a result of social agreement about the symbol? Are there any pictorial symbols, pictured here or which you could suggest, which might have several meanings and hence several aspects of control, depending upon who the obserer was?

How do the one-liners function as symbols? How do they function as tools for some sort of control? What sort of feeling is each one-liner meant to evoke? What other one-liners can you suggest which are used to promote ideologies, to sell products, to suggest courses of action?

How do political speeches function as tools of control? Does the significance of a speech lie in its word-for-word meaning, or in the rhythm and style of its delivery? Is the very format of a public speech in any way symbolic? What silent languages are included in many public speeches? In those from whom excerpts were taken here?

DISCOVER

According to S. I. Hayakawa, the average person is 'swimming in words.' Newspaper editors, politicians, salesmen, disc jockeys, columnists, luncheon-club speakers, and clergymen; colleagues at work, friends, relatives, wife and children; market reports, direct-mail advertising, books, and billboards—all are assailing him with words all day long.'

—*Language in Thought and Action*, page 15.

In addition, there are many other message forms he needs to take account of. Traffic signs make drivers and pedestrians follow established and orderly patterns. Policemen's badges, patrol car markings, soldiers' uniforms, ministers' garbs, doctors' and nurses' uniform all point to the importance or position of the person or office.

Traffic signs, religious symbols, patriotic and environmental symbols focus people's attention on various aspects of human social relationships Sometimes these same signs and symbols are used to persuade people to do things, go places, think in certain ways and act in certain manners.

The Thanksgiving turkey, Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and a floppy clown named Ronald MacDonald are used to force people's attention to the task of acquiring things.

Gold stars or colorful stickers are used with primary grade children to reward approved behavior. As students get older, the stars and stickers are replaced by letters and numbers—and function in much the same manner. They exercise control by rewarding or punishing conformity or nonconformity to standards.

INTERFACE

How have you recently used symbols in a power or control situation? Were you aware of the symbol-control relationship you were developing, at the time that you used the symbol?

What sorts of symbolic control devices do you observe in your home? In your school? In your church? At your place of employment? How often do you think consciously about these devices and your relationship to them?

DISCOVER

To study control through communication, you need also to consider hidden dimensions of communication and communication behavior which effect and impact communication in societal groups. Communication might, for example, be studied under a general heading like 'organizing patterns' which would include order, selection, congruence, time, space, territoriality, play defense, and exploitation (Hall, 1966, passim). Within the context of these patterns, a person reads meaning into or invests with meaning what he and other men do; sometimes with as technical a message system as language, often times not.

Significant control exists when the words and other symbols used evoke responses and influence the actions of people who take account of them. So, for example, learners have reasons for learning; these reasons arise from inner needs and from self-direction and responsibility on the part of the learners.

Similarly, the black youth might learn whitey's habits and patterns of dress and speech in order to make a success in white economic circles. But he is brought up short by his friends and family and accused of being a tom if he takes these habits home with him and uses them in everyday life among these friends and acquaintances.

The reader, the speaker, the writer all have power by virtue of their ability to control and use words effectively. Literacy is seen as a major map out of poverty. Education is seen as the way to a better life and something for which to save one's money and sacrifice. Somehow, communication and the ability to deal with communication seems to be the key to success.

INTERFACE

What forms of speechmaking do you observe in your daily classroom experiences? In which cases, do you think, is the speechmaking a conscious act, consciously engaged in for control purposes?

In the unconscious speechmaking you observed, can you suggest causes for the action? If such action seems to be a habit with the speechmaker, how do you think it developed?

How do you observe parents and others in authority symbolizing their position or control? In which instances do you consider such efforts positive? In which negative? What makes them positive or negative?

INVESTIGATE

1. In light of this chapter and insights gained thus far in the book, **discuss** the following quotes:

   'All we really can observe about order is how it is communicated.' —Duncan, page 3.

   'All we see of man . . . are the various forms of expression.' —Duncan, page 31.

   'When you first drive up in a Cadillac, even old friends will see you in a new light . . .' —advertisement.

   'Things don't have meaning; our nervous systems manufacture meanings from the raw material fed to our sense organs.' —Johnson, page 5.

2. **List** 20 of the most familiar symbols used in advertising.

3. **Collect** and **clip** 10 to 15 ad messages from newspapers and magazines and analyze the way each uses symbols to control attention.

4. **Discuss**: Money is only a symbol, but it controls whole nations.

5. **Describe** five or six interesting and complicated job titles and tell how you think they were developed.

6. **Discuss** the following quote from Edward T. Hall:

   'All men are captives of the language they speak as long as they take their language for granted.'

7. **Complete** the following 'subtle' commands. Add four or five of your own.

   'Nice girls don't . . .

   'No politician can afford to . . .

   'You'll never get along in this world unless you . . .

   'In order to succeed in business, you've got to . . .

8. **List** ways in which communication functions to direct and control values regarding:

   ethnic and racial understandings

   men-women relationships

   class and status divisions

   age distinctions

JOURNAL

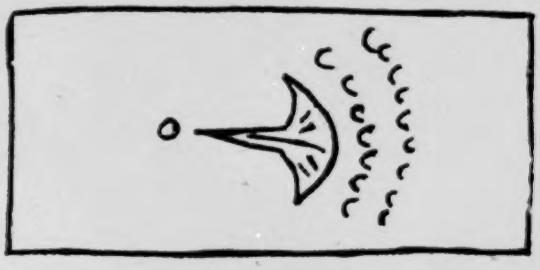
PROBE

Why do we call communication a process?

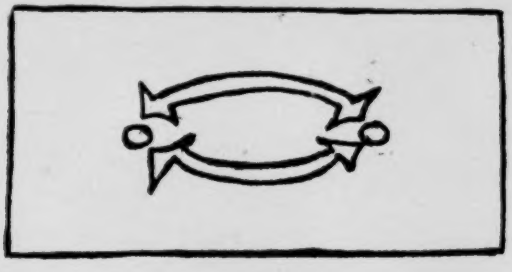
LAB

Process

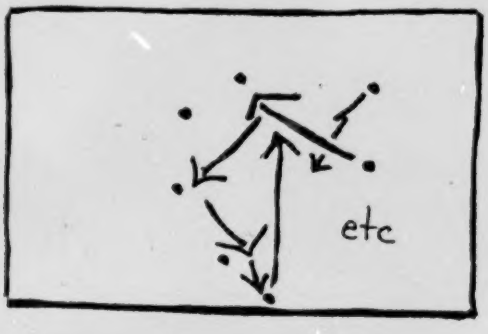
Using the symbols you find most appropriate, diagram the directions conversation seems to flow as you observe a group of people in conversation. For instance, in a meeting in which a large number (or small number) of persons listen to one speaker and give no feedback, the visual presentation might be:



Or in a discussion between two persons in which both individuals do equal amounts of talking and other communicational acts, the diagram might look like:



When several persons are actively engaged in communication acts, lines and arrows may move frequently across the page.



Identify the person(s) who seems to play the most central or dominant role in the conversation, as well as the person(s) who fit into the diagram with least frequency.

How do the various participants reveal their feelings about the communication event? What do participants do to control or direct the communication event?

On a scale of 5 to 0, with 0 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate the degree of participation in communication of each member of the group you observed?

Participant	Role	Degree Rating (0 to 5)	Feeling about Event	Methods for Control

INQUIRE

What does the communication process lab reveal about the nature of human communication? Why do you think the lab was named 'process'? How would you define 'process' in the light of insights gained during this lab?

Were there silent languages involved in the communication activities of group participants? Or hidden agendas which seemed to you to be getting in the way of participants' activities?

DISCOVER

In Unit Nine, we talked about the ingredients in communication. In that unit, we looked at these ingredients separately. Now we'll look at them in relation to each other, to get a better look at communication as process.

The dictionary describes process in a number of ways, several of special use to us here. One definition of process is a 'series of actions, changes, or functions that bring about a particular result.' Another is 'on going movement, progression.' Perhaps the definition you wrote earlier in this unit adds something to these definitions. At any rate, within the notion of process is a concept of development, reaction, response-to. In communication processes, participants in communication are continuously taking messages (which are sometimes expressed in words, sometimes in gestures, often times in silent, nonverbal languages) into account for some end. Communication processes involve persons in responding to and approaching information, situations, other persons.

INTERFACE

Does your understanding of the process nature of communication improve your ability to communicate? Or does it hinder it? Why?

What sorts of communication processes operate within your family during a typical family meal? Do some members of the family exhibit certain of the ingredients of communication more than others? Why do you think this is so?

In product-oriented communication participants are concerned about getting things done. In process-oriented communication, they are concerned about the interactions among participatns. Would you consider the communication within your classrooms process or product oriented? Are there times when these two orientations blur and blend together?

INVESTIGATE

Trace one significant communication events from what you would consider its beginning through four or five resulting communication events. **Show how** each of the communication events influenced or resulted from another.

Illustrate, using whatever visual means you wish, your understanding of the process called communication.

Describe the process of learning how to ride a bike. **Try** to find parallels between this task and learning how to communicate. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

Write an essay to answer the question 'What Am I?' Try to incorporate the processes which made you the 'Who' that you are. What role did communication play in your coming to be who you are?

Describe the connection between how you communicated when you were 15 and how you communicated when you were five years old. Between when you were five and when you were first born.

Ask the person next to you a simple question. Listen to her/his response. **List** a dozen or so different elements that went into that communication event.

JOURNAL

PROBE

How does culture inflence human communication?

LAB

Groups and Cultures

Name at least three societal subgroups belonging to the following societal divisions or groups.

Ethnic groups _____

Age groups _____

Educational levels _____

Economic classes _____

Religious groups _____

Political groups _____

What makes it possible for members of each group to participate in communication?

What makes communication across or among groups difficult?

How do people gain admittance to each of the societal or cultural subgroups?

LAB

Sports Headlines

The following headlines or their equivalents have appeared in newspapers throughout the past decade:

Holy Cross massacres Notre Dame
Bulls demolish Redskins
Rams bow to Gophers
Giants steal the crown
Badgers trample Buffalo
Maple Leafs skate all over Blackhawks
Chicago steals another from Detroit

INQUIRE

Can we really believe that these events happened as they are described in the headlines? Is there nothing truly remarkable about the events announced by the headlines? Or is there a sports culture which makes such reporting acceptable?

Why do you think sports reporting has taken on qualities of exaggeration and boasting? How would a stranger from another culture deal with the headlines if the stranger read them in a newspaper without any preparation?

LAB

Clip 8-10 examples of sports culture as chronicled in a newspaper or summarize sports culture reporting on broadcast media.

Attach one story below and beside it, line for line rewrite the headline and first four paragraphs of the story so that it does not contain sports culture jargon. What does your revision add to or subtract from the original?

Original

Revision

EXPERIENCE

There is no experience in which the human contribution is not a factor in determining what actually happens. The organism is a force, not a transparency. —*John Dewey, 1934.*

INQUIRE

What is **your** culture? Your subculture? How would you describe yourself if you could not refer to any of the cultures or groups you considered in the Groups and Cultures lab? In preparing such a self-description, what could you relate yourself and identity to? What limitations would you encounter?

Can you think of any individuals or types of people who might encounter and/or live in similar relation-less or root-less situations?

Why do you suppose soldiers, missionaries, minor diplomats, refugees and other persons often need a time for re-orientation when they return to their own cultures following lengthy periods in other cultures?

Why would the prisoner kept in solitary confinement experience orientation problems when he was released? Why do you suppose some convicts fear release from prison, and some mental patients are unable to cope with their progress toward recovery?

DISCOVER

Culture, as the term is used in this unity, refers to the deep, usually unstated experiences shared by members of a society, communicated among them without knowing, and unconsciously allowed to form the basis by which all other events are judged. So culture is powerful in determining language and language use. In fact, the culture in which a person lives has the power to mold the very structure of his existence. No matter how hard a person tries, it is impossible to ignore or 'get rid of' one's culture becuase it has penetrated to the very roots of his nervous system, determining how he perceives the world.

Culture is mostly a hidden entity, although it surrounds and engulfs us. It is outside of our control. As Edward Hall states, 'People cannot act or interact at all in any meaningful way except through the medium of culture.' The culture of a given country influences ways people get into communication—or refrain from communication. Silent languages, as referred to in Unit 13, are a part of this culture.

So, in America, grown men don't cry. They usually don't enbrace other men in public—or in private for that matter. They play certain set strong roles in male-female relationships, in family settings, in positions of authority. And many of these roles grow out of response to environment.

INTERFACE

Which of the subgroups you listed under the Groups and Culture Lab do you belong to? Which of them are related to your home and family life? Which take you away from your home and family life?

How do subgroup and cultural differences make themselves evident in your everyday school and work experience? How do you deal with these differences?

What literary work have you read (or seen filmed) recently which in some way discusses the problems arising out of cultural conflicts? How successfully (or unsuccessfully) do you feel the author or filmmaker dealt with culture as an aspect of human communication?

What clues do you look for in determining affiliations and loyalties? How many of these clues are based on external evidence alone?

DISCOVER

A key to understanding communication in culture is recognizing the importance of a person's environment. Each human act is in some way a response, an adjustment to something or some situation. According to John Dewey, 'All activity takes place in a medium, in a situation, and with reference to its conditions.' In other words, experience, learning and communication are dependent on environment; in fact, they are the 'interaction of organism with its environment.

Environment includes human as well as physical surroundings: material elements, traditions, institutions. Our experiences of these surroundings are what helps us give meaning to them.

INTERFACE

What are the elements in your everyday environment that have greatest influence on the way you act and make decisions? How have you acted recently to change or improve any one of these elements?

In which environment, home or school are you personally called upon to make more choices and more response-adjustments? Why would you say this is so?

What literary work (in print, play or film) have you experienced recently which dealt with some person's response to environment? What insights into human communication did the author of the work provoke in you? How is your experience different from that of the main character(s)?

INVESTIGATE

How are the following looked upon in present day American culture? On what do you base your assessment?

Games

Entertainment

Holidays

Education

Leisure

Religion

Furniture

Do-it-yourself

Privacy

Literacy

Are the items above considered as you have described them by all people throughout the world? If not, why are there differences?

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